

EAST AND WEST SERIES

AN INTERPRETER OF THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

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Gautama Buddha : Prophet of Compassion

He who destroys life....digs up his own roots

— *The Buddha*

The Buddha And The Nations*

BY T. L. VASWANI

The life of Gautama Buddha is a life of singular beauty and singular fascination. A prince, he becomes a *bhikkhu*. He renounces the palace and joins the Brotherhood of the Poor. Heir to a throne, he lives on alms.

He sees what the Buddhist books call the "four signs." Witnesses to impermanence of the world! He sees an old man, a diseased man, a dead man, and a monk. And there enters into his heart a vision of *dukkha*, the world-sorrow. "What is the way out of the world-sorrow?" he asks.

He goes upon his quest. He leaves the city quietly at night. He renounces the palace to go in search of a cure for the cruelties and stupidities of life.

A moving story this,—of the Buddha's quest that ends in Illumination and attainment of *nirvana*. On reaching the forest of meditation, he gives away his fine clothes to his charioteer, saying:—"These fine Banaras clothes do not befit a *sramana*." Gautama, the prince, becomes a *fakir*.

After seven years of *tapasya*, he is on his way to the Bo-tree. A grass-cutter meets him and offers him two bundles of grass. A simple gift! A poor

* May 25 is the thrice-sacred Buddha Day, the day of his birth, the day of his illumination, and the day of his *nirvana*.

man's gift! An offering of love! One symbolical, too, of the eightfold bond to be loosened before the Illumination may come. The Buddha scatters a handful of grass on the ground and forms a seat for himself and says:—"I care not if my skin and nerves and bones decay; I care not if my life-blood dries up; but I will not leave this seat of grass until I attain to Enlightenment."

What divine will-power in these words! And what may not a man achieve if he would wake up his will-power!

In this mighty faith sits the Buddha on the grass seat. And Mara, the Tempter, comes and asks him to vacate the seat. "No!" says the Buddha. His mighty resolve nothing must shake. His resolve is destined to revolutionise history. Mara becomes angry. He throws a weapon at the Buddha. It falls as a garland of flowers! Mara hurls rocks at the Buddha. His resolve is stronger than the rocks. They drop down as nosegays at his feet! Mara looks small. Nothing can harm a man of harmlessness. Nothing can vanquish a man of mighty will-power and faith.

"The seat belongs to me," says the Buddha to Mara. Then Mara calls up a big army, and says to the Buddha:—"Look! so many bear witness to me. Who is your witness?" And the Buddha, pointing to the earth, says:—"Behold the Earth bears witness to me!" Then Mara's army disappears. The Buddha's *divya chakshu*, the "heavenly eye," opens. The Buddha attains to Enlightenment.

After Illumination, he says:—"Among the nations I shall go." He leaves the forest to take the message of wisdom to a wandering humanity.

He does not find the task an easy one. When he goes out to teach, he is assailed from different sides. Brahmins call him an atheist. Jealousy and hate invent false charges against him. He enters Banaras, alone, and is at first treated with scorn. He dines at the house of a fallen woman,—Ambapali—"fallen," but full of *bhakti* for the Buddha : and men build on it a scandal against him. Interested persons bribe a bad woman to say that he had slept with her. And in all this fight against calumny and hate, he uses but one weapon, *maitri*, love for all, *daya* for his "enemies."

His love conquers, at last. There comes a day when India's millions take their law of conduct from his lips. Village after village is converted. Robbers and courtesans and criminals are converted. Out of love for the Buddha, India as a nation renounces meat-eating. Singular in the world's history is this devotion of millions to one man. India under the influence of the Buddha's personality becomes a bearer to the nations of a religion of Humanity.

Today, "the Earth bears witness" to him! Today, East and West pay homage to the Buddha! Today, as five and twenty centuries ago, his message speaketh to the millions of India, if they will but listen and answer in the language of life.

The essence of his message may, I think, be discerned in his very first discourse and, again, in his parting words just before he passes into the Great Peace. At Banaras is delivered his first discourse. In it he expounds the "Wheel of *Karma*." Ye are sons of your *karma*! Ceremonies

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Try This Experiment Today !

BY EMMET FOX

Try this experiment today! Select one particular thing in your life which is not going well and which you wish to make successful. Then treat it each day with selected thought. Spend from a quarter of an hour to half an hour reconsidering the matter in the light of your knowledge of God and of prayer. Remind yourself that harmony and true success are the divine purposes of your life. Remind yourself that this particular thing must come under that law. Realise that because there can be no exception to natural law, this thing cannot remain inharmonious or negative once you know the Truth about it. Realise that you are now knowing the Truth about it and claim that the Divine Power in you is now healing the condition completely and permanently.

Then give thanks for a complete demonstration. Give thanks, and try to feel thankful. Mentally act the part of a person who has received his demonstration and still is filled with natural gratitude. Remember that praise and thanksgiving are the most powerful prayers of all. Do not treat the subject again until the next day.

Next day, repeat your treatment, and so on each day until the demonstration comes.

The treatment, however, is only half of the work. In between treatments you must keep your thought right concerning the problem. If

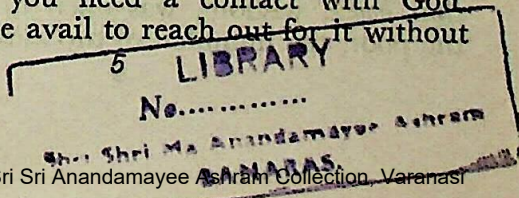
it is possible to keep your thought off it altogether in the intervals between treating, so much the better. If for any reason this is not possible, either because you are very much worried concerning it or because the condition is one which you cannot really get away from, the thing to do is to handle it with right thought all day long. This is vital. You must not allow yourself to think wrongly concerning that subject under any circumstances. If other people speak negatively, you cannot help that but you are not obliged to agree with them mentally. Remember that it is your mental agreement or acceptance that controls your life.

This all-day-long guiding of your thought about a particular subject cannot fail to bring your demonstration if you are persistent....

You have a gold mine within more fabulous than the famous mines of King Solomon, or any of those that have been discovered in the Klondike, or California, or the Rand. Of course, the gold mine within does not mean within the body. It certainly does not mean within in any physical sense.

In metaphysics, or the Truth teaching, when we speak of "within" we mean thought. "Without" or "outside" means expression, or manifestation. For instance, we sometimes say, "As within, so without," meaning that as we think so do we express.

So the gold mine within means that your power in life lies in your thought. However, to operate this gold mine you need a contact with God. It will be of little avail to reach out for it without



that.

Your contact with God lies in recognizing your identity, the "I am." The "I am" is everything you arrogate to yourself in thought. If you say, "I am sick," you have ordered your own. If you say, "I am well, I am one with God," you have ordered your own.

God is universal,—“I am what I am,”—and you as an individual particularize it when you say, “I am.” When you use your “I am” in an inverted or negative sense, you are using it against yourself and will bring sickness, poverty, controversy, and fear into your life.

When you particularize, or individualize, Divine Power by using “I am” constructively, then you will get health, prosperity, and abounding happiness, for you will have identified yourself with God,—the gold mine within.

The Buddha And The Nations

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and creeds will not save you. Right conduct is needed. Again, lying on his bed between two trees and seeing that his beloved disciple, Ananda, is weeping at the passing of his Master, the Buddha says:—“Weep not for me, Ananda! Hold fast to the Lamp of *Dharma*!” And this Lamp of *Dharma*, as the life of the Buddha shows, again and again, is *maitri*, is *daya*, is love for all, is fellowship with the poor. The Buddha recognised no caste. The Buddha recognised the sacred claims of all Humanity, of all life. And the Buddha taught that *bodhi*, wisdom, was open to the poorest of the poor, the humblest of the humble.

Sister Shanti : An Angel Of Peace

BY J. P. VASWANI

Shanti! The name means "peace." And Shanti was the very picture of the peace that passeth,—surpasseth,—understanding. Her soul was fair as a lily and radiant as the morning star.

Many years ago, there came to India a wise woman from the West. She visited different places in India and met a number of saints and sages, men and women of God. She learnt of Beloved Dada* and came to Karachi to visit him. Shanti, then, was in her early twenties. Her eyes sparkled with the radiance of purity and her face shone in the light of innocence. She was charming and graceful. She wore a white dress and held a rose in her hand. The one was a symbol of her purity and the other, of her love.

The lady from the West,—Mrs. Tanner was her name,—said to Shanti :—"Tell me, what is your name?"

"They call me Shanti," was the quiet answer.

"What means the word, Shanti?"

"Shanti means peace!"

"You have a very sweet name," said Mrs. Tanner. "Tell me if you have found peace."

In answer Shanti smiled. It was the smile of a person who is at peace with herself and with the world.

And Mrs. Tanner said to her :—"Tell me, where

* Sri T. L. Vaswani.

did you find peace? In quest of peace have I travelled all over the globe. I have visited the five continents. I have met men and women of light and leading. I have studied the scriptures of the world's great religions. But my heart continues to be restless as ever. Tell me, where did you find peace?"

And Shanti answered :—"At the Lotus-feet of my Beloved Master,—Beloved Dada."

Yes,—Shanti found her peace, the rest of her soul, the home of her heart at the Lotus-feet of Beloved Dada. She clung to him as the vine clings to the tree.

From early childhood, she had a great love of God and His holy saints. Whenever she learnt that a saint had visited Hyderabad-Sind,—the place where she lived,—she would ask her elder sister to take her to the holy presence. She would bow to men and women of God in reverence and ask for their blessings. And when a holy man asked her, "My child, what is it that you desire the most?" little Shanti answered :—"Fellowship with a pure soul, a *satpurukha*, a true man of God!"

Unlike other children, she did not spend her time in playing games or dressing dolls. She spent much of her time in silence. She would sit in the courtyard of her house and gaze at the beauty of the setting sun, wondering silently :—"One day, the sun of my life will set. Where, then, will be my dwelling-place? And where was I before I entered this earthly body? And how many bodies have I worn and put off in this endless adventure of existence? And when will this seemingly endless

cycle of birth and death come to a close? O, for someone who may explain to me the mystery of this unintelligible world?"

Thus she pondered. Often her eyes seemed to be resting on a far-off vision, on something which was unseen but really present,—something or someone she loved immensely. She spoke to the Invisible Presence in secret. She prayed to Him, again and again. And as she prayed, she forgot her surroundings and, on several occasions, lost consciousness of her body. Warm, tender tears trickled down her cheeks, as she prayed :—"O Lord! bring me in contact with someone who may bring me in contact with Thee."

Her prayers were answered. One day, she learnt that a holy man had arrived in Hyderabad. They called him Sadhu Vaswani.* As she heard the name, her heart throbbed. She longed to see him.

The next day, in the dark of the dawn, she came to his *satsang* (spiritual assembly). She looked at him. What a figure! Big head, bright curly hair, radiant face, glowing eyes. And when he opened his lips to speak, he thrilled, he inspired, he filled the hall with the music of his words and the richer music of his heart. His message was simple and direct. He did not speak out of books : he spoke out of the book of life and the book of the heart. He spoke of self-denial as the secret of the true life. Except you deny yourself, he said, you will continue to wander. Words came out of his lips, as in a flowing stream. And as he spoke, Shanti sat in a quiet corner, gazing at his mystic face.

* Beloved Dada was, then, known as Sadhu T. L. Vaswani.

There was nothing conventional about his teaching. Let us not *talk* of religion, he said; let us *practise* it. For religion is life, abundant life, a life of victory over the lower desires, appetites and cravings that make a man restless as a storm-tossed boat. Religion is life: and if you would truly live, learn to give! The more you give, the more you live!" "Believe me," he said, "there is a holier music in silent service of the poor and lowly, than in all the gorgeous chanting of temple-priests." And service of the poor, he continued, "is worship of God. For the poor, are the pictures of God! So he who gives food to the hungry, also, prays. His prayer is through the hand!" And then, lifting up his voice, he said :—"So many gods of gold in the temples! If you will truly worship them, melt them and pour out the gold in service of the starving, shivering gods of this earth!"

He spoke of service and self-denial as the gateways to the New Life. He gave the story of a King who invited his people to the wedding-feast of his daughter. The feast was held in the Royal Gardens. Anyone could attend the feast : there was but one condition to be fulfilled. The guests, as they entered the Gardens, must put off their old clothes and put on new ones, which were offered them by the King's men.

"And this day," said Beloved Dada, "I say unto you, put off your old clothes of lust and anger, of selfishness and greed, of passion and pride. Put off your old clothes of slavery to desires and put on the new clothes of self-denial, self-control and self-sacrifice!"

As Shanti listened to the words, she felt there

was in them a hidden power. It held her spell-bound. And for sometime, she forgot everything,—forgot her surroundings, her body, herself!

As she returned home, that day, she had a feeling of having found that which she had sought. She felt as though her quest was over. Here was he for whom her heart had longed. He would give her the “new clothes” she needed, and she would be clad in raiment of light.

Day after day, in the early hour of the dawn, this little girl of ten years would move on to the place where Beloved Dada held his *satsang*. She was usually the first to arrive, and the last to leave. She would sit in a corner and gaze and gaze at Beloved Dada’s pure, mystic face, until he left the Hall.

One day, she made bold to meet him, face to face. Dada greeted her with the words :—“How are you, little one?”

And she said to him :—“It will not be difficult for you to remember my name. You always conclude your inspiring discourses with the words, *Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*. My name is Shanti.”

Dada smiled. “With that smile,” Shanti said, “he made me captive. And I said to myself :—‘I no longer belong to anyone! I do not belong to myself. I belong to him,—my Guru and my all!’”

It was a great day in the life of Shanti. It was the beginning of a link between her and her Master,—a link which became stronger, as the years passed, a link which is timeless, deathless, eternal. For the earth will pass away, and the sun and stars will grow cold : but the link between the Guru and the disciple is everlasting.

When Shanti was twelve years old, Beloved Dada opened an *ashram*. And Shanti came and lived there. She dedicated herself completely to the service of her Master and the service of God. Beloved Dada so blessed her that she became a blessing to many.

Dear Shanti's heart was a home of longing and love,—deep yearning for the First and only Fair, and love and compassion for all the suffering children of God. She was a picture of humility and helpfulness. She harmed no one : She judged no one : She criticised no one : she found fault with no one. But she gave the blessings of her brave, beautiful heart to all. And whenever she found an unhappy soul, she did not tender advice in words, but she went and prayed for the unhappy one in secret. And her prayer worked : for her heart was unselfish, sincere and pure.

In dear Shanti's heart there was sadness, but on her face there always played a sweet, seraphic smile. She received everyone who came to her with the warmth of love. She was kind to all, never seeming to think of herself, but always doing good to those around her. She was specially affectionate to the little ones. And the little ones loved and trusted her. They came and clung to her as though she were their own mother.

Dear Shanti was the very picture of loving-kindness. Her words were always sweet. Even in the face of provocation, she did not yield to the temptation of using a harsh word. The tongue is meant to repeat the Name Divine, she said, and the heart is a shrine of the Lord. Therefore must the heart be pure and the tongue guileless.

Dear Shanti always smiled. It is said, she was born with a smile on her face. When a child is born, its first act is a cry. But the infant Shanti did not cry : she smiled. And this smile was with her till the last day of her earth-pilgrimage. Even in the face of death, she smiled! In the midst of bodily pain and suffering there was a smile on her face and a song in her heart. One day she said :—“Look at the kettle on the fireplace! Though up to the neck in hot water, it continues to whistle and sing!”

Dear Shanti did not desire the things of the earth : her soul aspired to God.

“What do you desire the most?” I asked her once. And she answered :—“Nothing short of God.”

The world and its wealth, its pomp and power were nothing to her. “Thou, O Lord, art my all!” was the repeated prayer of her love-filled heart.

Five years ago, on the 15th of May, 1970, dear Shanti dropped her physical body. But she has not left us. I feel her presence by me wherever I go. And even as I write these few words, methinks, I see her pure, radiant, ever-smiling face. And I hear her voice say :—“Even as the running brook seeks the sea, even so must your heart seek the Lord and be lost in His Love. And never forget that the poor are the pictures of God. Cultivate sympathy and love and reverence for them. And vindicate the cause of brother birds and animals, God’s little creatures, who suffer and groan in this world of tragedy and tears!” It is a message which the modern world sorely needs. For humanity’s hope is in a new resurgence of the spirit of love and compassion.

Of Such Is The Kingdom

BY T. L. VASWANI

He that is humble shall reign. To enter the Kingdom, thou must become as a little child.

Pride : its secret is misappropriation. The vitality within thee,—of mind, heart, and soul,—is a flow from the divine *shakti*. To claim the vitality as thine own apart from the divine as its source and sustaining spirit is to fall into pride. Is it not a common and conspicuous sin of modern life?

Love, if thou wilt live in the Kingdom. And there is no love without humility. No ascent without descent! Be humble to grow in the Spirit. Humility is the motto of wisdom. And these two,—Wisdom and Love,—are the laws of the Kingdom.

Humility is born of consciousness of the living presence of the Lord of Love. Pride is due to loss of memory. Pride and forgetfulness go together. If thou wilt remember thine Original Home, if thou wilt apprehend thine inner divinity, thou wilt be humble. The one continual prayer of the humble man is:—"Not to me, but to Thee, O Lord!" To Him belongs all glory, for He is the Living Original of the True, the Good, the Beautiful.

Not without reason does the Gita teach:—"Whatsoever thou eatest, whatsoever thou doest, do it unto Me!" Self-abnegation is necessary, for not

until thou deny the lower, empirical, illusory egoistic self mayst thou be reborn in the divine Self. And the Kingdom of the Lord belongeth to the regenerated, the rejuvenated, the reborn, the twice-born.

Pride is misappropriation. Pride is theft. When thou hast *ahankara* (pride) thou dost steal to thyself the glory which does not belong to thee. It belongs to the divinity within thee.

Pride is the fertile source of man's steady fall into matter,—his materialism, his dissociation from the divine, the spiritual, the *atmic*. And the more he falls into materialism, the more he moves in the world of *maya*,—a world of false standards, false judgments, false values.

Humility gives clearer vision, for humility takes the seeker into a new atmosphere. And not until thou wilt sit as a child before the Spirit may Its secrets,—the divine mysteries,—speak to thee.

Here is a sure mark of him who has touched the divine depths of life : he is lowly yet moves about with a strange dignity. He is poor yet asks for nothing. He has humility beautifully blended with energy. He has reduced himself to the level of the dust, but that dust reveals the divinity.

Blessed are the humble, for they become instruments of the Ancient who is the One Worker as, indeed, He is the Immanent Spirit of cosmic evolution.

Should you ask me, what is the first thing in religion? I should reply, the first, second and third thing therein — nay, all — is humility.

—ST. AUGUSTINE

Blessed Are They That Serve*

BY SISTER SHANTI

It was a pleasant spring night. I slept under the spacious, starry skies. In the middle of the night, I had a beautiful dream.

I found myself walking along the road leading to Heaven. I was beautifully dressed, clad in rich, gaudy clothes. Walking along the road I reached the gate of Heaven. I knocked at the door. The door would not open. I knocked again. And a Voice from within said:—"Go back, the door will not open to you!"

"I am fair and beautiful!" I said; "and my apparel is so fine!"

But still the door would not open.

Back I went to the place whence I had come. On the way, I found a poor, old woman, who had got stuck up in mud and mire. Howsoever much she tried, she could not come out. She cried for help. My heart was touched. I did not think of my costly clothes. I ran to the rescue of the woman.

By God's grace the woman was saved. My clothes became soiled and dirty. I found myself once again at the door of Heaven. I knocked at the door and this time it yielded to my knocks. The door opened and a Voice said:—"Welcome! Truly blessed are you, for you have soiled your clothes in the service of the poor. The Gate of Heaven opens to those who silently suffer and serve God's creatures!"

* This was written by Sister Shanti when she was a student in the Shakti High School, Hyderabad-Sind.

What To Do With A Sleepless Night

For years I had trouble to sleep. I would lie there pressing my eyelids down over wide-awake eyes, trying to relax each muscle, praying. But my mind kept whirling and my eyes kept popping open.

Finally one night I said to myself, "How stupid! I'm wearing myself out trying to go to sleep. I may as well get up and do something useful."

Then came the question:—How best to use the time? Housework? "No, I do that all day long." Sewing? "Machine too noisy." Suddenly an idea came to me. Why not use these sleepless nights as extra time to do all the things I loved to do and never had time for as a busy wife and mother.

From then on, whenever I found myself tossing and turning, I would lie there till I'd decided just what I'd like most to do. Then I'd get up with joy, thanking God for the extra time He was giving me. Sometimes I would write,—letters, a poem, my personal thoughts. Sometimes I'd read, but only what I really wanted to read. Sometimes I'd think of people I know and of their needs, and pray for them.

As I grew drowsy, I would put away my "play-things" and go back to bed. Some nights I only managed four hours of sleep. But I rose as refreshed as if I'd slept soundly for eight hours. The day after would be delightful. Far from feeling overtired, I tackled my work with zest,—not like those wrung-out days when I had fought for sleep.

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To A Newly-Wed Couple*

BY J. P. VASWANI

And there came to him, one day, a newly-wed couple. And they said to him:—"Master, we have just been joined together in wedlock. Give us your blessings, and give us a teaching!"

And the Beloved said:—"Not unoften wedlock becomes a padlock, and marriage becomes a cage. If you would live a life of freedom and fulfilment, see that you are *always* in love with each other. Let every day of your life be to you as the eve of your wedding!"

And turning to the bride, the Beloved said:—"Be humble! And be helpful towards everyone! And let your face always wear a smile! And wherever you find hatred, sow love. And wherever you find injury, sow pardon. For life is given us to build not break!"

And turning to the bridegroom, the Beloved said:—"Be pure,—and be not possessive! Give without expecting anything in return! Love without any thought of being loved! For it is in giving that you truly receive, and it is in loving that you become God-like!"

Then joining their hands together, the Beloved touched their heads with his holy hands and said to them:—"You are as the two flowers on the
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* Being a message given to Bharati and Rakesh whose marriage was solemnised at Bombay on 7th April, 1975.

Daily Inspiration :

Thus Spake Shanti

[Excerpts from the utterances of Sister Shanti]

May 1 **The One Thing Needful**
The Lord has given me everything. But there is one thing for which my soul longs, day and night!
It is the sweet Name of the Lord!

May 2 **Surrender**
Wouldst thou walk the way of the Blessed Ones?
Then must thou surrender thy all at the Lotus-feet of the Beloved!

May 3 **You are a Child of God**
Live in the world, do your daily work, but never forget that you are a child of God!

May 4 **Recollection**
Do your duty and think of the Lord all the time!

May 5 **Images of God**
The poor and broken ones are the images of the One Lord.

To serve them in love and reverence is to draw nearer to God.

May 6 **Be Still !**
You may turn the beads of the rosary for years together, but you will draw close to God only when you become still and, in silence, let God speak to your soul!

May 7 **Awareness**
Hold on to your divine awareness and do not step into the waters of forgetfulness!

May 8

The Eternal Now

I am a child of the Spirit. I am bound neither by a past nor to a future.

I live in the eternal now, the limitless, infinite now!

And the wisdom and goodness and beauty of God belong to me!

May 9

All Things are Possible

What is there that the Lord cannot,—and will not,—do, if only we go to Him in faith and love?

May 10

The Way of Victory

The way of victory is the way of lifting oneself up!

We do not have to fight,—resist,—temptation. We have to rise above it, to lift up our consciousness to the Lotus-feet of God.

We may not succeed at the very first attempt. But if we persist, victory will be ours!

May 11

Acceptance

Let us not try to understand the why of things. But let us accept them, in the full assurance that there is a meaning of mercy in all that happens.

May 12

Good and Evil

Good is stronger than evil.

Let us trust in the Lord and know that His Ways are the ways of Wisdom and His Love is the one shining truth of Life!

May 13

A Pilgrim

A pilgrim am I. I have but a few days to live. Bless me that I may learn to surrender unto Thee all I am or have.

May 14

Garland of Humility

May I be the dust of all! And wearing the garland of humility, may I reach the Abode of the Beloved!

May 15 **In the Day of Death**

Nothing, O Lord, have I ever hid from Thee.
In the day of "death," Beloved, be by me!

May 16 **Child of Grace**

O Lord! make me a child of Thy grace!

May 17 **Purity**

You must live a pure life. Without self-control, you cannot,—will not,—make any progress, even though you may live in the company of holy men and listen to their discourses for years together.

May 18 **The Way**

Repeat the Holy Name, meditate on the Lotus-feet and give the service of love to the poor and needy.

May 19 **Satvic Food**

We should eat *satvic* food and refrain from taking food of violence.

May 20 **Birds and Animals**

Birds and animals are our brothers in the one family of creation. We must give them the service of love and so help on their and our own evolution. We must not kill them or have them killed for food.

May 21 **Prasadam**

Whatever food you take, first offer it to the Lord, then take it as His *prasadam* (sacrament).

Such food becomes *Brahma-bhojan*. It purifies the blood : and when blood is purified, the mind gets purified!

May 22 **Self-conceit**

The spiritual aspirant must, at every step, guard himself against self-conceit.

May 23 **Nothingness**

The more you advance on the Path, the humbler you become. You realise your utter nothingness.

You realise that without God you are nothing!

May 24

Grace

Without the grace of God, man achieves nothing. Realising this, he grows in the consciousness of his utter unworthiness. He turns more and more to God.

May 25

God's Quest

God is in quest of humble souls.

When He finds someone who acknowledges his nothingness, He fills him with His own Being.

And the man becomes a living, moving temple of God.

May 26

What can we Give to God?

What offering can we give to God?

All things are from Him : all things are in Him. There is nothing that He has not.

So let us be nothing and offer that to Him!

May 27

The Holy Name

Repeat the Holy Name by day and night, awake or asleep, while at home or walking on the street, sitting in silence or while doing your daily work.

Repeat the Name of God with love and devotion, tears flowing from your eyes.

May 28

Latent Powers

Through *japa* and meditation and loving service of the poor, the latent powers within us are unfolded.

May 29

Field of Action

The world is a *karma bhumi*, a field of action. Each one has his work to do. It must be done well!

On the earth-plane, the soul evolves through work. 'Even I work!' says the Lord in the Gita.

May 30

Suffering

When we suffer for our own sake, even a little

of it becomes hard to bear.

When we suffer for the sake of God, He takes up the burden and we find the yoke easy.

May 31

Brahma Nirvana

To surrender is to hand oneself over to the Lord.

Then let Him do with me what He likes.

Then I will not question, why this, why that?
'Tis not for me to question why : 'tis for me at His Feet to lie!

Then my personal will vanishes, gets merged in the Divine Will. And I glide into *Brahma Nirvana*, the Peace of the Eternal.

What To Do With A Sleepless Night

[Contd. from page 17]

half the night.

After a while my gift nights came less and less often. When several busy weeks would pass without one, I would actually catch myself wishing I would not be able to sleep! Isn't that something!

—Lorna Smith in *Guideposts*

To a Newly-Wed Couple

[Contd. from page 18]

branch of yonder bush. You are not separate from each other. And yet each one of you has a separate life. Respect each other's freedom! And never forget that you are pilgrims, way-farers to the Holy Height where shines and shines and ever shines the Temple of Light. Pilgrims are ye! Therefore let each day of your life be a search for the better, for perfection, for that spiritual perfection which places service above self and which seeks a blessing in every blow. Pilgrims are ye! Therefore, each day, let the prayer of the ancient pilgrims rise from your hearts:—Nearer, O God! to Thee!"

Book Reviews

By "Piya"

MEDITATION : ITS THEORY AND PRACTICE,
By Hari Prasad Shastri. Pub. : Shanti Sadan, London. pp. 64.
Price : 30 pence.

This beautifully produced little book, in bold and clear type, at a very modest price, is offered as a kind of every-man's guide and introduction to the purpose and uses of meditation as a constructive part of living in the modern world, not as an escape from it.

The book is divided into two sections,—one dealing with the theory of meditation, its meaning, foundation, principles and purpose, and the other with the practice of meditation,—introducing very briefly the methods of meditation from the most simple and elementary practices to the advanced contemplation like *dhyana* and *samadhi*.

In the gifted author's opinion, "Meditation begins when the mind makes a courageous and determined effort to come into contact with the light of Truth latent within itself,—and that it leads ultimately to the attainment of complete freedom from limitations, and the realisation of God as one's own Self or Atman!"

A book of great value to all who wish to *practise* meditation.

VISNU SAHASRA-NAMA, By T. M. P. Mahadevan.
Pub. : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. pp. 70. Price : Rs. 2/—.

As the path of the Unimanifest is difficult for many to follow, worship of an image or a conception of God is suggested specially at the initial stages and "the image of Vishnu is such that it easily fascinates and absorbs the mind and heart of the worshipper." The purpose, the author believes, of worshipping Gods and forms, and of reciting His Names "is to get rid of our obsession with the name-and-form world."

This slim and chapterless book is to be read slowly and

lovingly; for it is full of grand passages and haunting verses from the Bhagavad Gita and from other ancient sages.

The book, we believe, will open to some readers new perspectives and fill them with new hope.

ASHTAVAKRA GITA, translated by Hari Prasad Shastri. Pub. : Shanti Sadan, London. pp. 60. Price : 50 pence.

The dust cover states that the book expresses the highest truths and embodies the philosophic thought of the sages Ashtavakra, Yagnavalkya and Vamadeva. The reader breathes a larger air wherein his consciousness is elevated; further, he is, or should be, able to embody the teachings in his life.

Small enough for a hand-bag, this powerfully written book of lyrical verses has much to teach us.

ESSENCE OF HINDUISM, By D. S. Sarma. Pub. : Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. pp. 121. Price : Rs. 3/-.

"To get to the mountain of God you must reach its foothills." And the foothills, I believe, are the different religions of humanity. Hinduism, the most widely accepted religion in India, is most comprehensive as it provides for the well-being of man in all stages of his life and does justice to the flesh as well as the spirit of man.

The author, Prof. Sarma, speaks with authority as he tackles broad issues like Hindu ethics, philosophy, theism and rituals with admirable clarity.

Simply and concisely written, this slim volume acquaints us with the salient features of Hinduism.

THE MOTHER'S CALL AND OTHER STORIES : By R. P. Parthasarathy. Pub. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. pp. 152. Price : Rs. 3/-.

The book is a collection of eleven engrossing and highly entertaining stories which have such a realistic touch that an Indian reader would almost identity himself with the characters and setting of the stories.

In the foreword, Mr. Diwakar writes :—"While realism peeps through the stories, fiction clothes it with an attractive garb so that one wades through them, as if carried by a compelling sense of curiosity."

The book has the blessings of Shri Rajagopalachari and should have a very wide circulation.

GEMS FROM SHAKESPEARE: By P. G. N. Nayar. Pub.: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay. pp. 282. Price : Rs. 5/-.

This charming anthology consists of a selection of citations,—real pieces of art,—that adorn Shakespearean plays and poems, under different subjects, alphabetically arranged.

Shri Nayar, in his illuminating preface, says :—"Shakespeare defies definition and denies description. Yet it is not abstract. It has a personality of its own at once superb, supreme and sublime."

Considerable labour has gone into the making of this volume. We heartily recommend it to all students of Shakespeare in particular and English literature in general.

BOOK RECEIVED

[Reviews may appear in due course]

GOETHE AND ROUSSEAU : By Carl Hammer, Jr. Price : £ 10.50. Pub. : The University Press of Kentucky, Lexington 40506.

1. **OPEN SPIRIT :** By Ladislaus Boros : Translated by Erike Young. Price £ 2.95; 2. **SPRINGS OF LOVE :** By Blake, Byron, Goethe, Rilke, Shakespeare and Stendhal; 3. **SPRINGS OF HAPPINESS :** By Bacon, Bulwer, Franklin Grenfell, Thoreau, Yeats; and 4. **SPRINGS OF ANIMAL WISDOM :** By Chaucer, La Fontaine, Lawrence, Tennyson, Whitman. Pub. Search Press, Ltd., London.

MYSTICAL POEMS OF RUMI : By Jalal al-din Rumi : Translated from the Persian By A. J. Arberry. Price : 2.95. Pub. : The University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

1. **THE KEY TO THE SCIENCES OF MAN :** By D. G. Garan, Price : \$ 10.00; 2. **LET MY PEOPLE LIVE :** By Dagobert D. Runes. Price : \$ 5.00; 3. **THE HUMAN EXILE :** By Bela Fischer. Price : \$ 6.00; 4. **SOME PARADOXES OF PAUL :** By Edmund B. Keller. Price : \$ 8.50; and 5. **A WORKABLE FAITH :** By June Smallwood Wood. Price : \$ 6.00. Pub. Philosophical Library, Inc., 15 East 40th St., New York, N. Y. 10016.

THE 'HEAVEN' AND 'HELL' OF WILLIAM BLAKE : By G. R. Sabri-Tabrizi. Price : \$ 13.50. Pub. : International Publishers, 381 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

News and Notes

By "GULSHAN"

Inspired Apostle of India's Culture

On Thursday the 17th of April, at the evening fellowship meeting, Brother J. P. Vaswani paid a glowing tribute to the memory of the departed philosopher-statesman, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. Addressing the huge gathering, he said :— "Dr. Radhakrishnan was an illuminated interpreter of the Ancient Message, the Eternal Message of the Rishis, of which India has been a custodian since the morning of history. He was an embodiment of Vedic culture, who influenced national thinking, and helped to secure the world's respect for India, through his writings." Brother J. P. Vaswani further added that although Dr. Radhakrishnan occupied the highest position of honour in the country, he had the matchless jewel of humility. He lent lustre to every office he held and, after retirement, displayed a reticence, which is very rare in public life these days. He lived up to the high ideal of simple living and high thinking, even in the opulent surroundings of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Years ago, Beloved Dadaji referred to Dr. Radhakrishnan as an "Inspired apostle of Indian culture," "A Voice of strength, a Voice of hope, a Voice of inspiration."

The Bridge between the East and the West, the ancient wisdom and modern science, that Dr. Radhakrishnan built, through his writings, will be a memorial to him, more lasting than any statues that a grateful nation may put up.

Sri Rama Still In Exile !

The sacred Ramanaumi, which fell on the 20th of April, was celebrated in a fitting manner at the Mira Campus.

Thousands of years ago, on this sacred day, bathed in love and mirroring love, the *Parama Purusha*,—the Supreme,—manifested Himself in Ayodhya, to set righteousness on her throne again. Leaving His starry abode, the Limitless accepted all the limitations of a human body and lived as a mortal among mortals, naming Himself Sri Rama.

"Sri Rama is an *avatara* of *shakti*, of humility, of compassion. He is not a departed figure of a dead past but a living force. The Name of Rama,—*Rama Nama*,—is a great spiritual force. By repeating the Holy Name, dacoits like Ratnakar were washed clean of their sins. *Rama Nama* is not only sweet and pure, but also purifying. It cleanses the heart and the mind of all its impurities, and unfolds the *shakti* which, at present, lies dormant in us," emphasised Brother J. P. Vaswani in his *upadesh* at the early morning fellowship meeting. He added :—"Sri Rama, the Beloved of millions of hearts, is still in exile, because we have failed to live up to His ideals. There are still millions in India who go without the bare necessities of life,—food, clothing and shelter. Our nation-wide poverty can only be eradicated if our ministers and officials follow in the foot-steps of Sri Rama, who, being a King, would not take His meals until the poor were fed."

On this sacred day, about four hundred needy *sufed-posh* sisters were given bottles of rose syrup. Fruits were distributed among the needy patients in the Sassoon Hospital. The disabled children and lepers were fed. The disabled children were also given cloth worth about Rs. 1,000/-

This day was also sacred to the memory of a devotee of Sri Rama,—Sri Pahlajrai Vaswani,—elder brother of Beloved Dadaji (Sri T. L. Vaswani) and the dear father of Brother J. P. Vaswani. Sri P. L. Vaswani departed to his Heavenly abode on the Ramanaumi day. In his life was blended the twin-principle of prayer and service. He prayed to the Lord fervently, but he did not forget that service of the poor and needy was, indeed, worship of Sri Rama.

This sacred day also reminded us of the Father of our Nation—Mahatma Gandhi,—whose failing breath continued to repeat "Hai Rama ! Hai Rama !"

We bowed in reverence before the three of them and prayed that we too might be so blessed as to lose ourselves in the Beauty of the Eternal.

Three Spiritual Disciplines

Dada Tagna, the day sacred to the memory of Beloved Dadaji, fell on the 7th of April, and was celebrated with great enthusiasm and devotion at the Mira Campus in Poona and at the Mira Satsang, Bombay.

At Poona, the programme commenced with *Namkirtan prakarma*, in which students of the Mira Schools also participated. The programme also included recitations from various scriptures, kindling of the sacred *havan* fire, *akhand path* of the *Guru Granth Sahib*,—one of the greatest scriptures of Humanity which speaks of the Supreme, the Perfect Being as the One and the Same for all,—and service of the *Daridra Narayana* who received *prasad* (rice and vegetables) cooked by the devotees. Over four hundred needy sufed-posh sisters received packets of onions, potatoes, tea-leaves, sugar, match-boxes, and a rupee each.

At the morning fellowship meeting, sitting in the sanctified atmosphere of Beloved Dadaji's sacred Samadhi, we considered ourselves fortunate to be able to listen to Beloved Dadaji's flute-like voice on the tape. Beloved Dadaji spoke to us concerning Saint Kabir. He told us that Kabir's teachings clustered round the pivot of three basic necessities for every seeker :— (1) annihilation of the ego : one must first free oneself from the tentacles of 'I'-ness in order to be allowed into the Divine Presence; (2) *Hari bhajan*,—singing the glories of the Lord; and (3) service of the poor and needy. Kabir emphasised that mere chanting of the Name Divine is not acceptable unto the Lord. One must accompany it with service of the needy who are His broken images.

Shanti Yagna

Shanti Yagna, the day sacred to the memory of Sister Shanti, fell on the 22nd of this month. The programme commenced with early morning worship, followed by service of the needy school students. During the day, a band of devotees went to the Sassoon Hospital to distribute fruits and toys among the bed-ridden children. They had not been properly attended to as the hospital staff had been on strike. It was a heart-warming sight to see the pain in their eyes replaced by joy at the sight of the toys and balloons.

At the evening fellowship meeting, Brother J. P. Vaswani, in his inspiring *upadesh*, said :—"Sister Shanti was among the very few, who realise their mission on the earthplane, and see that they fulfill it before the 'call' comes. The world-intoxicating *maya* could not delude her. Her eyes could not be arrested by any other thing in the world, except the

purpose in hand, and that purpose was none other than Love of God, and Love of the suffering children of God. She nourished this delicate creeper of love by the flow of tears through her wakeful eyes. She sacrificed every bit of her body and life at the altar of Love, and when the 'call' came to her, there was a smile on her lips and her eyes shone with the gleam of the glorious future. The voice of Sister Shanti's life is : —“Grow in the Love of God and dedicate your life to Him in the service of His suffering creation.”

The True Khalsa

The 14th of April was celebrated as a day sacred to the memory of Guru Gobind Singh, whose sacrificial life is an immortal glory of humanity. Guru Gobind Singh has given to humanity the Khalsa community.

At the evening fellowship meeting, Beloved Dadaji explained that a true “Khalsa” is one who is “pure in heart.” The distinguishing qualities of a true Khalsa are :—

(1) He is not afraid of manual work. He does not shirk his duties and responsibilities.

(2) He lives away from strife and is at peace with all.

(3) He earns his daily bread by the sweat of his brow.

(4) Every day, he recites from the *Guru Granth Sahib* and lives in constant awareness of the presence of God.

(5) He serves others in the true spirit of humility. The Khalsa serves in silence without blowing his own trumpet. And he draws many closer to the heart of God.

Mahavira Jayanti

The 24th of April was celebrated, all over India, as the Birthday of Vardhaman Mahavira,—the founder of Jainism.

At the evening fellowship meeting, Brother J. P. Vaswani, in his address to a large gathering, said :—“Mahavira means a great victor. And Mahavira was a great victor of purity, *tapasya*, and compassion. The true victor is he who gains victories over himself,—his lower self of desires, appetites and passions. At the early age of thirty, Mahavira renounced the world and set out in quest of Truth. After 12 years of *tapasya*, having attained the goal of human birth,—the realisation of Truth,—Mahavira did not retire to a cave to enjoy, selfishly, the bliss of meditation, but he became eager to share with the world his vision of joy and peace. He moved,

from place to place, from town to town, from village to village, preaching his great gospel of peace. In his teaching there was emphasis on the following five things :—

- (1) Non-violence : have compassion for all creation. Keep away from food of violence.
- (2) Truth : refrain from indulging in falsehood.
- (3) Non-stealing : do not covet that which does not belong to you.
- (4) Purity : be pure in thought, word, and deed.
- (5) Non-attachment : for attachment is darkness."

"I Have Talked With God !"

The 15th of March was celebrated as the birthday of the God-intoxicated Saint, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, whose name spontaneously evokes adoration and love in the heart.

At the evening fellowship meeting, Brother J. P. Vaswani gave us a glimpse into the birth and life of Sri Ramakrishna:—"Sri Ramakrishna was born of poor parents in Kamarpukur,—a wayside village in Bengal. His father was a pious man, and never deviated from the path of Truth. He was dispossessed of his ancestral house and property because he refused to bear false witness to the advantage of his landlord." We were also told that Sri Ramakrishna conceived of God as the Eternal Mother who is ever-ready to grant us the priceless boon of Divine Wisdom, if only we develop intense yearning for Her Lotus-feet. The impediments in the path are *kamini* and *kanchan* (woman and gold).

In an age of growing disbelief and denial, Sri Ramakrishna raised his voice above the storms of doubt and scepticism:—"I have talked to God and walked with Him." He thus restored the falling edifice of Religion upon a new and more secure foundation.

Sister Shanti's Birthday

The 25th of April dawned with music, fragrance, light. It was the day on which the flower of dear Shanti's life unfolded under the sunshine of God's smile, the dews of His grace, the breezes of His kindness, sustained by the rock of His love.

Sister Shanti's Birthday was celebrated as the "Children's Day." The Mira Schools had organised an enthusiastic programme in which some students paid glowing tributes to

Sister Shanti. The School students, ex-students and teachers contributed cloth for the needy, grain for birds and fruits, toys and other eatables for the deaf and dumb children, whom they visited and served in love and reverence, thus bearing witness to Sister Shanti's ideal of service. Some of the students also pledged to do at least one act of service a day, and to find a little time to repeat the Holy Name of God.

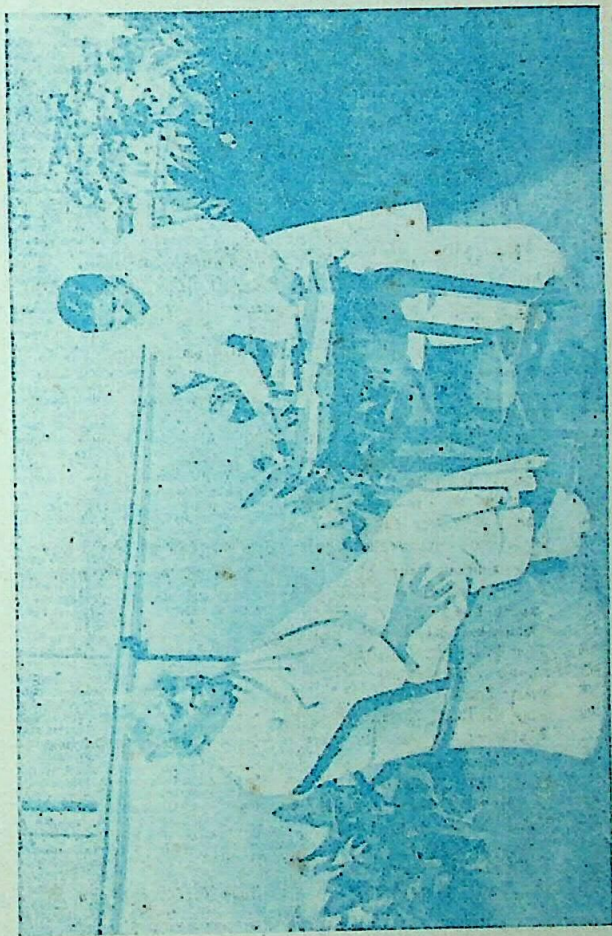
In his address to the students, Brother J. P. Vaswani gave us an insight into the ideal life of Sister Shanti. He said:—"Sister Shanti lost her father at a very tender age. This made her aware of the transitoriness of human life. And she resolved to spend each and every day of her life in collecting the true treasure,—Love of God and Love of the suffering children of God. She grew in the twin principle of prayer and service. All those who came to her with empty hearts, returned with hearts filled to over-flowing with the gentle knowledge that there was at least one door in God's good world where the unwanted were wanted, where the friendless were befriended."

Later in the day, over 400 needy sufed-posh sisters and brothers were served; and fruits and toys were distributed among the sick children in the Sassoon Hospital.

At the evening fellowship meeting, Brother J. P. Vaswani told us that many sought Sister Shanti's hand in marriage, she could easily have lived like a queen. But she sacrificed everything at the altar of Love. She was wedded to her Eternal Beloved for ever. The deepest aspiration of Sister Shanti's heart, according to Brother J. P. Vaswani, was summed up in the words of the great Sindhi Poet-Saint, Shah Abdul Latif:—"Men seek the world, its wealth and possessions. I do but long for the Beloved. And for His sake, I fain would sacrifice the whole world. The sweet Name of the Beloved is my heart's delight. What, then, will be my condition when I behold Him, face to face?"

Steeped in the wine of Love, Sister Shanti lived on tears and slept on tears, and she gave the love of her pure, unselfish heart to all.

The Master and the Disciple



.Beloved Dadaji and Sister Shanti

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